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ment twice repeated (IV. 35, 695), that the court of appeals has held that the legislature cannot compel a municipality to pay laborers whom it employs the rate of wages prevailing in the locality. The case cited, *People ex rel. Rodgers v. Coler* (166 N. Y. 1), merely holds that the legislature cannot compel such payment by contractors for public work. The language, in the opinion of Judge O'Brien, upon which the author relies, was not essential to the decision. And that such payment by a city can be compelled by statute was affirmed by a majority of that court in the later case of *Ryan v. New York* (177 N. Y. 71).

There is no reference to the importance of the novel doctrine laid down in *re Jacobs* (98 N. Y. 98), and since followed; nor any discussions of the decisions, which are merely noted. In fact the treatment of the decisions of the courts seems perfunctory rather than philosophical. This is the least satisfactory part of the book, but notwithstanding contains much that will be of use to the practitioner.

Most of these, however, are minor blemishes, which can easily be corrected. The book is indispensable to all constitutional lawyers, legislators, and statesmen in New York. It will be interesting and useful to every lawyer and man in public life in every part of the United States and to all students of constitutional history and sociology throughout the world. It will be the standard authority upon the subject for at least a generation.

ROGER FOSTER.

The Story of Old Fort Johnson. By W. MAX REID. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1906. Pp. xii, 240.)

THE most famous historic house in the Mohawk Valley to-day is probably old Fort Johnson, situated a few miles west of the site of Amsterdam. Not only has this old colonial "mansion" with its surrounding hills and valleys a local interest, but, through the prominence and significant influence of the original owner and his family, the history of the building appeals to a wide circle of readers and students. Persons interested in the preservation and proper care of the relics of our past will rejoice that this historic building has been placed in the hands of the Montgomery County Historical Society. For about a half-century the house was in the possession of the Akin family, but in 1905, in order to settle the family estate, the property had to be sold. Through the munificence of Major-general J. Watts de Peyster, a grandnephew of Lady Johnson, the wife of Sir John, the building was presented to the society. It will become the museum of the society and will house, among other objects, the interesting Richmond collection of Indian relics.

It is unfortunate that better advantage has not been taken of the opportunity to write a good local history on the subject. *The Story of Old Fort Johnson* is an interesting, rambling tale; it is a mixture of history, fiction, ethnology, and gossip. One does not expect scientific

history from the author of *The Mohawk Valley*, and therefore this "companion book to *The Mohawk Valley*" is not a disappointment. The book is apparently not constructed upon any particular plan; although the title suggests an account of the history of an old frontier homestead, the author wanders far afield in many of the chapters—in one chapter as far west as Detroit. The topics treated in the volume are thrown together in a bewildering fashion, and the task of the reviewer, therefore, in following out the instructions of the REVIEW to give a brief outline of the contents of the book is difficult.

The opening chapter gives a very graphic description of the parting between young William Johnson and his Irish sweetheart. We see young William "striding along a country highway leading to the port town of Drogheda"; we see "the drooping form of a comely girl leaning on a stile constructed in a break in the hawthorne hedge which formed a border to the road he was travelling"; we hear the affectionate parting kisses. Fiction swamps history in the account but it is interesting reading. The succeeding three chapters deal with the life of Johnson and the history of the events with which he was connected. Chapter five is an odd combination of remarks on the character of Judas Iscariot and scrappy information about John Johnson. For several successive chapters we now make strenuous efforts to follow the thread of Revolutionary history in the Mohawk Valley. Chapter seven contains the journal of one William Colbraith, a soldier of Colonel Gansevoort's regiment stationed in Fort Schuyler during the siege. One entire chapter is given to a verbatim quotation of the will of Sir William. The concluding chapter of the volume contains an account of a summer ramble of the author and a couple of friends to Dadanascara.

C. H. RAMMELKAMP.

Alexander Hamilton: an Essay on American Union. By FREDERICK SCOTT OLIVER. (London: A. Constable and Company; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1906. Pp. xiii, 502.)

IN this book we have an attempt to write an essay on American political life at a time of its most important crisis the central figure and consideration of which shall be the career of Alexander Hamilton. The result is that we get neither a sketch of Hamilton's activity in a properly digested narrative nor a systematic discussion of the American Union in the days of its infancy. The plan is somewhat disjointed; and no more unifying fact appears than a rather inflexible admiration for the subject of the book. It is natural for an Englishman who writes about the controversy between the French and British factions of American society in the days of Hamilton to have his sympathy enlisted for the British party. It is also natural for him to admire Hamilton. But he ought to have enough discrimination to see the point of view of the other side and to recognize that his own favorite had some shortcomings. Neither of these things has Mr. Oliver done. Not only are the Democrats